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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4659
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 3867
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 2339
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 1367
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0776
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1999
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 6068
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4304
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 2247
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 000255

SIPDIS

STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

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SUBJECT: CHILE MEDIA REPORT - MARCH 18

Leading Stories

1. All dailies report on President Bachelet's trip to India and announcements that negotiations are underway for the signature of a Chile-India FTA. Dailies also reported on the increase in the construction of homes in the United States, which has "injected optimism" into global markets.

U.S.-Related News

2. Juan Carlos Ramos, sub-prefect of the Investigations Police IPR Investigative Brigade, was asked about the recommendation made by the International Intellectual Property Rights alliance, IIPA, to the U.S. Trade Representative to keep Chile on the Priority Watch List. Ramos underscored the creation of the special IPR brigade, noting the enormous effort for the Investigations Police (PDI) despite the scarcity of human resources. Ramos believes that the U.S. business sector is unaware of the existence of the brigade, but said that the U.S. government is familiar with it. "We have a strategic alliance with the U.S. Embassy," said Ramos. "Furthermore, our officers have traveled to the United States to train with IPR experts in different cities, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State." He stressed that the PDI "is the only police in the Southern Cone" that has such a brigade, which shows the extent of the effort undertaken by Chile's police to fight piracy. Ramos said it was "upsetting" to learn about IIPA's recommendation given the PDI effort. He said it is important to disseminate information about this special brigade, which is "100% dedicated to fighting piracy," said Ramos (El Mercurio, conservative, influential newspaper-of-record, circ. 129,000, 3/18).

3. 12-year-old Hunter Campbell was climbing the Tupungato volcano with his father and a guide. At 5,600 meters he became ill, prompting the guide to call for help and carry him down to 4,300 meters. A Carabineros police helicopter took the boy to a police medical facility where he was stabilized (Las Ultimas Noticias, leading-circulation, popular, circ. 140,000, 3/18).

4. "Editorial entitled, Obama's Commitment":

"This week we learned that AIG... had resolved to hand its CEOs US\$165 million in bonuses, when the government had handed out more than US\$170 billion to prevent the company from collapsing.... President Obama was enraged... and instructed the Secretary of the Treasury... to find a way to block the payment of the bonuses. The task does not seem easy, because the bonus is in contracts.... (But) Contract obligations cannot be justified when conditions have

changed so dramatically and there is a superior national and global good (Estrategia, business and financial daily circ 30,000, 3/18).

Local

15. Opposition UDI party has questioned the government's decision to hold the presidential election on December 11. The UDI noted that an eventual runoff election would have to take place in January, which is a traditional annual vacation month, which could affect voter turnout. The government disagrees and the Senate will address the topic this week (Government-owned, editorially independent, La Nacion, circ. 4,200, 3/18).

16. In a conference yesterday, Minister Secretary General to the Presidency Jose Antonio Viera-Gallo warned that the inclination of wealthy nations to resort to protectionism to confront the economic crisis is not the correct response. "Even President Obama included in the phrase, 'buy American' in his program. If that practice were to multiply, it would generate a serious problem that would only further complicate the crisis," said Viera-Gallo (La Nacion, 3/18).

SIMONS